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17 July 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, WH/4

SUBJECT : BARKER, Bernard L.  
(201-251689)

1. The Subject, an operational asset of both Havana station and JMAE, is currently in the Washington, D.C. area at the suggestion of Mr. Howard HUNT, in an effort to resolve his citizenship status. He was interviewed by a representative of WH/4/SO on 15 July 1961 at the Shoreham Hotel to develop all available background information concerning his loss of citizenship and previous steps taken to restore it.

2. BARKER was born 17 March 1917 at Havana, Cuba of a native-born U.S. father and a Cuban mother. His birth was recorded at the U.S. Embassy and he was recognized as having acquired U.S. citizenship by birth through the citizenship of his father. He traveled, not on a U.S. passport, but on an identity card proclaiming his U.S. citizenship. During World War II, he entered the U.S. Army Air Corps, was shot down on his 12th mission over Germany and was a prisoner of war for 16 months. He was honorably separated as a Captain.

3. In 1950, along with several Cuban-born, U.S. citizens who were war veterans, he entered the Cuban police force, where his bilingual abilities soon brought him advancement. He was, at this time, in contact with Mr. SPEARS, the FBI representative at the American Embassy in Havana, and also worked closely with the Treasury representative in breaking up two narcotics rings plying between Florida and Cuba. He served as escort for Mrs. THUMAN and Margaret on their visit to Cuba, for which he received a White House commendation.

4. In BARKER's opinion, he became the object of personal spite on the part of an unnamed Embassy staff member, who took action to revoke his citizenship status based on his membership in the Cuban police. In an effort to rectify his plight, Mr. SPEARS, the Embassy FBI representative, sent him to Dr. Mario LAZO, a leading Havana attorney, to prepare the case for a plea to regain

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citizenship. According to BARKER's recollection, this occurred in 1953. Dr. LAZO compiled a formidable file on the Subject and was in communication with a Washington, D.C. legal firm, which BARKER dimly recalls as that of Edward Bennett WILLIAMS, who was to handle the case locally. A private bill was introduced in the 83rd Congress by Congressman WILLIAMS of New Jersey to restore the Subject's citizenship, but BARKER does not know why no action was taken on the bill. At the time, he was in financial difficulties and took a job as a tractor driver outside Havana for about 8 months, in which period he had no contact with Dr. LAZO, who, as BARKER believes, interpreted his failure to appear in the office as a lack of interest in pressing the case to a successful conclusion.

5. BARKER knows that Dr. LAZO and WILLIAMS had compiled a very lengthy and documented file on his background, including his military record and awards from the Army Air Corps. Currently, BARKER is traveling on a Cuban passport and is in the U.S. as an "SP" paroled to Bernie REICHARDT.

6. The Subject pointed out that Dr. Mario LAZO entered the U.S. about a month ago and is now in the Washington area; he believes Jim NOEL is in contact with him. He knows Dr. LAZO is familiar with all details of his case and could confirm the identity of the Washington attorney who handled the litigation locally. BARKER recalls visiting the attorney's office in Washington on one occasion, and Bennett WILLIAMS was the name he recalled. He believed the lawyer was involved in the Senator McCarthy hearings.

7. Based on the above information, the following recommendations are made:

a. Mr. James NOEL be requested to ascertain from Dr. Mario LAZO the name of the Washington law firm which handled Subject's case in 1953, and the reason for the failure of the special bill.

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b. The Office of General Counsel be completely briefed on Subject's case and be requested to furnish guidance or take appropriate action to assist the Subject, whether by special legislation or other means, to regain his U.S. citizenship.

JOSEPH F. LANTIER  
Chief, WH/1/Security

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